

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONTEV 01154 080338Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
/068 W

-----052599 081911Z /66

R 071248Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6194  
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MONTEVIDEO 1154

E.O. 11652: NA  
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, UY  
SUBJ: GENERAL ALVAREZ DELIVERS SPEECH ON ARMED FORCES'  
POLITICAL ROLE

1. ARMY CINC GEN. ALVAREZ USED RECENT CEREMONIAL OCCA-  
SION TO DELIVER A BRIEF, BUT SIGNIFICANT AS WELL AS UNUSUAL  
SPEECH OUTLINING HIS VIEWS ON THE POLITICAL ROLE OF URUGUAY'S  
ARMED FORCES.

2. SPEAKING ON THE OCCASION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE URUGUAYAN COMMAND AND THE GENERAL STAFF SCHOOL (IMES),  
ALVAREZ RECOGNIZED THE MILITARY'S DEPENDENCE ON CAPABLE  
(CIVILIAN) STATESMEN FOR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, DIRECTION,  
AND CONTROL. HE URGED THE MILITARY TO BE APOLITICAL,  
IN THE SENSE OF AVOIDING PERIPHERAL ISSUES AND BEING  
USED BY ANY GROUP OR CLASS, AND HE WARNED AGAINST THEIR  
CONVERSION INTO "AN INSTRUMENT OF TYRANNY AND CORRUPTION".  
AS AN IDEAL, ALVAREZ CITED THE EXAMPLE OF REPUBLICAN  
ROME WHERE, WHEN WARS WERE WON, GENERALS AND SOLDIERS  
ALIKE LAID DOWN THEIR ARMS AND RETURNED TO CIVILIAN  
PURSUITS.

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3. ALVAREZ BALANCED THESE CONCEPTS WITH SHARP  
CRITICISM OF URUGUAY'S STATESMEN FOR FAILING TO PROVIDE  
LEADERSHIP AND A ROLE FOR THE MILITARY IN THE NATION'S  
AFFAIRS. HE URGED THE MILITARY TO IMPROVE THEIR OWN CAPACITY  
FOR INDEPENDENT JUDGEMENT IN NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE MATTERS,  
AND TO BE POLITICAL IN THE "NOBLE" SENSE OF BEING STUDIOUS,

CONCERNED, AND ALERT TO THE REAL AND FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS  
OF URUGUAYAN SOCIETY.

4. COMMENT: WE VIEW ALVAREZ'S SPEECH, BRIEF AND  
EQUIVOCAL AS IT WAS, AS POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT BE-  
CAUSE: (A) IT WAS A PUBLIC EXPRESSION OF A NUMBER OF THE  
POSITIVE CONCEPTS CONVEYED TO US PRIVATELY BY ALVAREZ'S  
CONFIDANTES DURING RECENT WEEKS; (B) IT WAS A SENSI-  
TIVE POLITICAL MESSAGE, FOLLOWING MONTHS OF RELATIVE SILENCE  
BY A POLITICS-SHY, TONGUE-TIED MILITARY LEADERSHIP; AND,  
(C) IT PROVOKED A RAPID REACTION OF THE ANTI-ALVAREZ  
FORCES (INCLUDING CRITICAL IF OBLIQUE STATEMENTS BY EX-  
ARMY CINC VADORA), INDICATING THAT THE FULFILLMENT OF  
ALVAREZ'S ASPIRATIONS TO ESTABLISH HIS POLITION OF POLI-  
TICAL LEADERSHIP STILL REMAINS MUCH IN DOUBT.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ARMED FORCES, MILITARY PERSONNEL, SPEECHES  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 07 apr 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Document Number:** 1978MONTEV01154  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
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**Expiration:**  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** PGOV, PINT, UY, (ALVAREZ)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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